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Tomboys, Adventurers & Talented Kids: Children in Films (Volume 3)

Andrew Musgrave

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This is volume 3 in the series **Children in Films**.

In the movie world GENDER DIFFERENCES are becoming blurred. The girl is portrayed as tomboyish, extrovert, out to prove she is the equal of the male. Although boys are still depicted as adventurous, there is a trend towards showing their more effeminate side, or as the subject of bullying.

We are reminded of LEGENDARY TOMBOYS: Mary Badham (*To Kill a Mockingbird*), Hayley Mills (*Tiger Bay*), Rebecca Smart (*Celia*), and Jodie Foster (*Candleshoe*), as well as more modern examples (AnnaSophia Robb, Anna Chlumsky, Zoé Héran), and girls who masquerade as boys in films such as *She's the Man* and *My Life as a Dog*. Then there are the male counterparts, in particular in *Billy Elliott*.

While boys still take part in adventures for the fun of it (*Journey to the Centre of the Earth, The Goonies, Stand by Me*), the girls find specific quests to pursue in *Now and Then, The Golden Compass* or *True Grit*.

Among the 130 films referred to in this volume, we herald the MUSICALLY TALENTED (*School of Rock, Sound of Music*), ARTISTICALLY GIFTED (*Miss Potter*), the SPORTS FANATICS (*Gregory's Girl, Bad News Bears, Switching Goals*), the UNDERDOG aspiring against the odds (*Little Miss Sunshine, Slumdog Millionaire*) and especially the AFRO-CARIBBEAN CHILD striving for recognition as in *Akeelah and the Bee, Knights of the South Bronx*.

The full range of titles in this series, **Children in Films**, are: 1 Gender Roles and Themes; 2 Families Step-kids & Orphans; 3 Tomboys Adventurers & Talented Kids; 4 Childhood Friendships: Peers, Pets & Grown-ups; 5 Make Believe Horror & the Supernatural; 6 Puberty & First Love; 7 Childhood Trauma: Illness, Death, Divorce & War; 8 Physical & Sexual Abuse.

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